UNDERSTANDING "OPENNESS" IN RESEARCH ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: DELIBERATIONS OF THE ROER4D PROJECT

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Understanding "Openness" in Research on Open Educational Resources: Deliberations of the ROER4D Project

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Overview

- The premise and opportunity of OER
- The ROER4D project
- “Open research” practices
- Benefits and challenges of open research
Key challenges facing education in developing countries

Education institutions under political & financial pressure

Rising numbers of students in the education sector

Expensive, limited in number, often outdated textbooks are not entirely relevant to the context

Reduction of educational funding by governments

Employability of graduates

OER as a response to some challenges facing education in developing countries

Improve the affordability of education through reducing students’ textbook and course development costs

Improve the quality & currency of teaching materials through adaptation and customisation

Improve teacher pedagogy to learner centred constructivism

Enable the personalisation of instruction

Increase visibility of teaching & knowledge from Global South

Open educational resources (OER) are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others (e.g. Creative Commons) (adapted from Smith & Casserly 2006: 8).

Any learner or teacher

Free videos

Free lecture notes
OER vs Materials on the internet

Internet
- Visibility of all types of materials for others to access freely that are copyrighted by default

OER
- Intentional contribution of teaching, learning and research materials for others to access freely and reuse legally
OER: Degrees of openness

Customise (e.g. translate, add local content)

Copy

Combine (e.g. select and mix content)

Contribute (e.g. share locally & with the world)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Copyright</th>
<th>Creative Commons Licences</th>
<th>Public domain</th>
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<tr>
<td>All rights reserved</td>
<td>Attribution Non-commercial No derivatives</td>
<td>Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suitable file formats</td>
<td>PDF, password protected document file</td>
<td>Wiki, xml, ODF, html</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Most restrictive | Most accommodating

| BY = Attribution | NC = Non-commercial | ND = No derivatives | SA = Share Alike |

Hodgkinson-Williams & Gray (2009:110) & Hodgkinson-Williams (2014)
Examples of OER from Africa (1)

http://oer.avu.org/

http://open.uct.ac.za/

http://www.oerafrica.org/
Examples of OER from Africa (2)

http://www.afrivip.org/open-education-resources

http://www.tessafrica.net
Slow uptake of OER in Africa

MIT OpenCourseWare
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Site Statistics

OCW is accessed by a broadly international population of educators and learners.
MIT OpenCourseWare averages 1 million visits each month; translations receive 500,000 more.
Visitors from all over the world use OpenCourseWare:

World Impact
Download our evaluation report
(PDF - 15MB)

http://ocw.mit.edu/about/site-statistics/
Low participation of Africa in open education

Open Education Initiatives (OER and MOOCs)
http://poerup.referata.com/wiki/Maps
Most OER research taking place in Global North

http://oermap.org/oer-evidence-map/
In what ways, and under what circumstances, can the adoption of OER impact upon the increasing demand for accessible, relevant, high-quality, and affordable education in the Global South?
ROER4D Objectives

1. Build an empirical knowledge base on the use and impact of OER in education
2. Develop the capacity of OER researchers
3. Build a network of OER scholars
4. Communicate research to inform education policy and practice
5. Curate research documents produced and data collected as open data
GENERAL OBJECTIVE:
IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL POLICY, PRACTICE and RESEARCH in developing countries by better understanding the use and impact of OER
ROER4D “Openness” and open research practices

What does it to mean to “be open”?

“strategic application of ICT-enabled openness practices” (sharing, transparency, reuse, revision, remixing, crowdsourcing, and peer production) in ICT4D interventions/activities to help tackle a development problem” (Smith, 2014)

How do we operationalise “open” in the ROER4D project?

- Research outputs (findings and data) to be released as legally shareable – CC licensed
- Sharing the process of research – proposals, literature review, technical reports, blogging, crowdsourcing
ROER4D open research cycle

- Conceptual Framework/s
- Methods
- Instrument questions
- Data
- Analysis tools
- Findings
- Proposal
- Literature Review

Open Research process
ROER4D sharing the process of research

www.roer4d.org
www.slideshare.com/roer4d
www.twitter.com/roer4d
AN OVERVIEW OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN THE SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST
ASIAN REGIONS
G. Dhanarajan
Wawasan Open University
Penang, Malaysia

Preamble
This paper responds to the brief given by ROER4D to review the socio, economic, educational and legal environments around Open Educational Resources [OER] on the Asian continent. Interest in Open Educational Resources [OER], in many parts of Asia, as a means to confront educational challenges, began to attract the attention of many workers in and scholars of education, especially those engaged in higher education, sometimes during the middle of the last decade. Those in Far East Asia (S. Korea, Japan and Taiwan) attracted by the buzz created by MIT’s Open Course Ware [OCW], were among the early enthusiasts. These early adopters, much influenced, further, by
Due to the number of projects and the different ways in which they could be grouped for different audiences, the ROER4D team are currently exploring software platforms to enable the dissemination of project outputs in a digital format that will allow for:

- Different **layers of detail** of reports:
  - Executive summaries
  - Policy briefs
  - Brief individual project reports
  - Detailed individual project reports linked to open data (where available)
- **remixing of content** (e.g. all the regional South American reports together and/or all the country specific reports together)
- **commenting** on the reports (for a period of time)
Benefits of “open” research in ROER4D

Benefits for those interested or affected by research
- Surfacing contradictions where authors publish about OER in “closed” journals!
- Mitigates situation where access to information is for those who can pay (disadvantage for those in the Global South)

Benefits for researchers and project team
- Early “warning” of potential problems and feedback from potential stakeholders
- Engagement and involvement of other OER researchers, open education projects stakeholders, (other) funders
- Sharing of research instruments, methodologies
- Promotes collaborative practices

Openness is not without risk!
Make open …
… if it adds value
… if it is ethical
… if it is legal
… by default
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Follow us: http://twitter.com/roer4D

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Acknowledgments & Attribution

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